GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4327
ANSWERED ON:19.05.2006
PACIFIC TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM
Panda Shri Prabodh

Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Statesman, Kolkata dated January 5, 2006 regarding Pacific Tsunami Warning System;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto ;

(c) whether Pacific Tsunami Warning System generates seventy percent felse alarms;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether such warning system is suitable for our country ;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) if not, whether the Government proposes to make alternative arrangement; and

(h) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) to (d) Yes Sir, The Government is aware that the percentage of false alarms from Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre is about 70%, such an uncertainty is not acceptable for India.

(e) & (f) No Sir. While the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) could provide the Indian Ocean countries with (a) earthquake information, epicenter, magnitude, (b) a general statement about the potential for Tsunami generation and (c) estimated arrival times of initial wave, it is quite clear that it cannot provide (a) confirmation that Tsunami actually exists, (b) forecast of Tsunami strength and (c) warning cancellation.

(g) & (h) Yes Sir, the Government is setting up an Early Warning System for Tsunami and Storm Surges in the Indian Ocean Region with the following components :
installation of tsunami warning sensors close to the ocean bottom at appropriate locales in the Indian Ocean, with real time connectivity;
Tide gauge and data buoys networking to validate arrival of tsunami waves at the coast;
strengthening of the existing seismological network to indicate, near real time occurrence of tsunamigenic earthquakes;
Modelling of the inundation scenarios for the entire coast and mapping of potential risk areas;
collection of information, analysis and generating status advisories.

The warning system is scheduled to be operational by September, 2007. A centre would be set up at Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad on a 24x7 basis.